

Message Text

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ACTION INR-07

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FM AMCONSUL MILAN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5557

AMEMBASSY ROME

AMEMBASSY MEXICO

C O N F I D E N T I A L MILAN 1344

NOFORN

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, PINR, PINT, IT, MX

SUBJECT: BIOGRAPHIC NOTE: DAMIAN RODRIGUEZ VAZQUEZ, MEXICAN

CONSUL GENERAL, MILAN

1. THERE IS NOT A MOIST EYE IN THE MILAN CONSULAR CORPS
AT THE SUDDEN DEPARTURE OF THE DEAN, LIC. DAMIAN
RODRIGUEZ VAZQUEZ.

2. DAMIAN CAME TO MILAN IN 1971 AS HIS FIRST FOREIGN
POST. HE EXPLAINED THAT HE WAS A FRIEND OF PRESIDENT
ECHEVERRIA AND THAT HIS PREVIOUS CAREER HAD BEEN AS A
POLITICAL APPOINTEE IN THE FIELD OF MEXICAN ECONOMIC
PLANNING. SOME TURN OF EVENTS HAD LED TO HIS MILAN
ASSIGNMENT WHETHER AS A REWARD OR PUNISHMENT WAS NOT
CLEAR.

3. A WELL NOURISHED SMALL MAN OF ABOUT 35, DAMIAN IS
MARRIED ALTHOUGH HIS WIFE WAS RARELY SEEN WITH HIM IN
MILAN. HE MADE MUCH OF HIS ECONOMIC INTERESTS AND MADE
NO ATTEMPT TO CONCEAL A PREFERENCE FOR THE LEFT WING
ITALIAN PARTIES. DAMIAN DESCRIBED ITALY AS RIPE FOR
COLLAPSE AND OTHER DISASTER.

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4. IN HIS PERSONAL RELATIONS, DAMIAN WAS STRONG ON
FLOWERY LANGUAGE, BUT INSENSITIVE TOWARD MOST OTHERS.
WHILE HE TREATED THE AMERICAN CONSUL GENERAL WITH
UNFAILING POLITENESS, HE DISDAINED LOCAL ITALIAN
OFFICIALS AND THE HONORARY CONSULAR OFFICERS IN MILAN.
HIS STAFF REFERRED TO HIM ONLY AS HIS EXCELLENCY AND HE

RARELY DEIGNED TO RESPOND TO OR RETURN THE TELEPHONE CALLS OF HIS COLLEAGUES. TOWARD THE END, HE WAS NOT ON SPEAKING TERMS WITH SOME INCLUDING THE VICE DEAN, A HAUGHTY SPANISH MINISTER WITH LITTLE TIME FOR RADICAL COLONIALS.

5. FROM HIS ARRIVAL IN MILAN, HE WAGED A ONE-MAN CAMPAIGN TO FORCE THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT TO SHOW GREATER RESPECT AND COURTESY TO THE CONSULAR CORPS. HE MADE A GREAT ISSUE OF THE CONSULAR CORPS HOSTING LUNCHEONS FOR LOCAL OFFICIALS INSISTING THAT THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT SHOULD BE ENTERTAINING THE CONSULAR CORPS INSTEAD. WHEN FATE REWARDED HIM WITH THE LONGEST TENURE AMONG CAREER CONSULS IN MILAN AND HE BECAME DEAN, HE PROGRESSED FROM ZENITH TO NADIR.

6. DAMIAN PRESENTED THE CONSULAR CORPS WITH AN AMBITIOUS PROGRAM OF MEETINGS, PUBLICATIONS, FORMAL DINNERS AND OTHER SOCIAL TRIMMINGS THAT ALIENATED THE CAREER CONSULS. AND SINCE HE TREATED THE CONORARIES LIKE SECOND CLASS CITIZENS, HE OUTRAGED THEM AS WELL. HIS UNILATERAL INVITATION OF THE SOCIALIST MAYOR TO A BLACK-TIE DINNER ON A SUNDAY NIGHT FOR WHICH EACH MEMBER OF THE CONSULAR CORPS WAS ASSESSED A LARGE PAYMENT BLEW THE FUSE. THE EVENT WAS CANCELLED. AND WHEN DAMIAN'S EXTRAVAGANT PROGRAM CAME TO A VOTE AT THE CONFIDENTIAL

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ANNUAL MEETING OF THE CONSULAR CORPS, HE WAS REBUFFED BY A VOTE SO LARGE THAT HE TESTILY REFUSED TO ANNOUNCE THE COUNT - ONLY THE RESULT.

7. FROM THAT TIME, THE DEAN WENT ON STRIKE. HE REFUSED TO PERFORM ANY OF HIS EXPECTED FUNCTIONS AND WAS DEAF TO REQUESTS TO RESUME CONTACTS WITH THE MAYOR OF MILAN - WHOM MUST HAVE BEEN THOROUGHLY MYSTIFIED BY LA VIE DIPLOMATIQUE.

8. FINALLY, ON AUGUST 12, DAMIAN ABRUPTLY CALLED THE COUNSELOR OF THE CONSULAR CORPS AND ASKED HIM TO PICK UP ITS FUNDS AND ARCHIVES SINCE DAMIAN WAS DEPARTING MILAN THE NEXT MORNING.

9. HIS OFFICE CANNOT PROVIDE A FORWARDING ADDRESS. BUT LIC. DAMIAN IS SURE TO POP UP SOMEWHERE.

10. CAVEAT COLLEGIUM*FINA

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Sent Date: 19-Aug-1977 12:00:00 am
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Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
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Errors: N/A
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